

bill asked for an additional week of floor debate. I agreed. The minority leader said this time this is a 2-week bill. I agreed with him and scheduled a second week of debate, and that is where we are now.

This week, we have conducted four rollcall votes, adopted four other amendments by voice vote, and we probably would have done more but for the unfortunate death of our colleague and friend, Senator Thomas. Yesterday morning, in memory of our friend, we decided not to work here, and that was the right thing to do. This morning, we have two more votes that are scheduled already on the Cornyn and Kennedy amendments regarding eligibility for the legalization program. We have proposed a unanimous consent agreement. We did that yesterday, and I understand the managers have that fairly well worked out on the 12 pending amendments to have votes on those later today. That was not accepted last evening, but I am hopeful that agreement can be worked out soon.

So it is clear we are working in good faith to process amendments and move forward on this bill. My decision about cloture last night was simply a way to ensure that we finish this bill in a timely manner. By offering to postpone the cloture vote, as I did yesterday, until tomorrow night, I am offering an additional full day of amendments before the cloture vote and, of course, germane amendments are considered postcloture.

I had a meeting in my office just a few minutes ago with a bipartisan group of Senators. I believe there is a good-faith effort being made by a majority of Senators, Democrats and Republicans, to move this bill forward. That is what we are going to try to do.

There are some people, rightly or wrongly—and that is all in the eyes of the beholder—who feel they have not had an opportunity to deal with this legislation. If that is the case, let's see if we can come up with some amendments that will make them happy. We do a lot of business in this body by unanimous consent—in fact, most everything. The cloture vote is scheduled for tomorrow morning, an hour after we come into session. We can change that. It is my hope that we can finish the bill this week. I am very confident we can.

I personally feel an obligation to go to the funeral in Wyoming. Craig Thomas was a Republican with whom I worked very closely on a number of issues, and I had great appreciation and admiration for him. Out of respect for him and Susan, I feel that I need to go to that funeral, and I am sure many others feel the same way. So that is going to change our schedule. It is my understanding that funeral is going to be Saturday. I have notified my caucus, and I have explained to the distinguished Republican leader that we may have to work longer hours this week. But let's try to finish this bill.

There are some, and it is a small number of people, who don't want this

bill finished under any circumstances. That happens on a lot of bills, and we have to try to work our way through that.

I hope people understand that I would like to get a bill passed. We have responsibilities as Senators to not only deal with immigration, which is a system, as I have tried to explain with a little vignette from Dr. Seuss, that is badly in need of fixing, but we have a lot of other problems in this country that are badly in need of fixing. So we may have to work hours the Senate hasn't seen very often. We may have to work into the night, tonight and tomorrow night and maybe even Friday and Friday night, and who knows if that will be enough time to get us over the hump.

I hope people will understand that it is not a question of how much time we spend on the bill, it is a question of whether people feel they have had the opportunity to change the provisions that are in the bill. I have gone over most of them: AgJOBS, DREAM Act, employer enforcement, legalization, border security.

I hope we can get this bill done. We can debate this bill all year and end up right back where we are. The American people did not send us here to pontificate; they sent us here to legislate. That is what I am trying to do and most are trying to do.

Recognizing that this immigration system is broken and that we need to fix it, I extend my appreciation to Senators—Democrats and Republicans—who believe this is the time for us to do something important for the country.

I have said on a number of occasions that this bill, when it comes out of this body, is not the last word. We have other ways of working on this bill. We, as Senators, are going to be fully involved in the legislation until it comes out of conference, which is after the House passes a bill which will have the imprint of the White House on it.

So I hope we can move forward in good faith and understand that everything we do in life has deadlines, even our legislation in the Senate.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. REID. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank our leader, someone who has been interested, along with many others, in the immigration issue, for the leadership he has provided in making sure the Senate was going to take up this issue. He had announced in January of this year that he was going to take a time for the Judiciary Committee to consider this legislation but that he was going to allocate 2 weeks of time, which was basically the time we took on the last bill, but it was a major period of time to consider the people's business regarding this issue. He has been accommodating in terms of working through the Senate's schedule. For all of us who are interested in getting a bill, we thank him for all he has done in terms of encouraging us to

reach judgments on these various measures.

As he has mentioned, we have made very important and significant progress, and I think there is a strong mood in the Senate, as there is in the country, that this is an extremely important issue. We are increasingly close to trying to at least make a recommendation to the country about what the Senate's judgment will be on this issue.

I join with him, as others, to say we are eager to move ahead during the day today and tomorrow and to work with the leadership. I know they have full schedules. I do think we are making significant progress and it is being done in a bipartisan spirit with a desire that those who have differing views about this issue can come together and do the Nation's business. When we achieve that, hopefully by the end of this week, both the Senator from Nevada and the Senator from Kentucky will be very much appreciated for their support in helping this legislation move ahead.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as I think my good friend, the majority leader, already knows, we are ready to work with the other side to schedule votes on pending amendments. I think the two managers are working together this morning to set up a schedule of votes for this afternoon. All of that is a step in the right direction.

Many of the amendments we hope to schedule, however, for the afternoon are amendments that were offered prior to the recess. My concern with cloture being filed last night is that we do not want to deny Members who have yet to offer—and many of them have been denied the right to offer their amendments this week—and those who have been denied the right to offer their amendments should still get their opportunity prior to being shut out.

Now, I am counting progress on this bill not by calendar days—that is one way of looking at it—but by the ability of Senators to debate and to vote on their respective ideas is the way that I would consider progress on the bill. So I hope we can clear out the amendments that are currently pending and that we will also work together to schedule debate and votes on additional amendments that are going to be offered.

Let me remind everyone again, on the day my conference elected me leader I said that I thought we ought to do two big important things, at least, in this Congress. And one of the issues I mentioned was immigration. So I am among those in the Senate who would